DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 165 473 FL 009 982

AUTHOR	Gonzalez, Gustavo
TITLE	The Acquisition of Spanish Grammar by Native Spanish Speaking Children.
INSTITUTION	National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, Arlington, Va.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Jul 78
NOTE	88p.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 1500 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 802, Rosslyn, Virginia 22209
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$4.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Child Language; *Grammar; Interviews; *Language Development; Language Learning Levels; Language Patterns; Language Research; Language Tests; Morphology (Languages); Native Speakers; Phonology; Preschool Children; Psycholinguistics; Sentence Structure; *Spanish; *Spanish Speaking; Speech Communication; Syntax; *Verbal Communication

ABSTRACT

The normal sequence of development of Spanish phonology and Spanish grammatical patterns in the speech of native Spanish-speaking children, two to five years old, was studied to determine the syntactic structures and range of language variability at each chronological age level. Middle-class children, living in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, whose parents earned between $4500 and $20,000 a year, were interviewed for a total of about two hours. The elicitation technique was basically conversational and materials of different types were used, including dolls, cars, and storybooks. The first interview consisted mostly of general questions; the second concentrated on verb tenses and moods; and the final interview included a morphology test which utilizes Spanish nonsense words. An experimental Spanish phonology test was also administered. The child was asked to repeat certain sentences that contain all the phonemes and significant allophones of Spanish. Syntactic structures found in each age group, a discussion of certain grammatical features, and an examination of the deviations encountered at the age levels are presented. Examples are given for almost every structure, but the deviations are not included. It is suggested that the findings would be valuable to kindergarten and primary teachers, curriculum writers, and test developers. (SW)

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ED165473

The Acquisition of Spanish Grammar

By

Native Spanish Speaking Children

Written by
Gustavo González

FL009982

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education was authorized by Congress through the enactment of Public Law 93-380, as amended in 1974. On October 1, 1977, the U.S. Office of Bilingual Education and the National Institute of Education jointly funded the Clearinghouse.

One of the activities of the Clearinghouse is "to implement a program of information products and services" during its first year of operation. The Acquisition of Spanish Grammar by Native Spanish Speaking Children, written by Dr. Gustavo González, forms part of the series of information products being produced by the Clearinghouse.

The Acquisition of Spanish Grammar by Native Spanish Speaking Children is a valuable source of information for educators who want to learn about the type of language that Spanish speaking children learn as a first language. Academic achievement and school can be more meaningful when educators understand and appreciate the richness of the language that their students bring to school. This study is one of the very few such studies of child language acquisition that focuses on a cross-sectional approach to the internalization of syntactic rules by young children. This study is the first such study of the acquisition of Spanish grammar by young children undertaken in the United States.

Dr. Gustavo González, currently Director of the Bilingual Education Fellowship Program at the University of California, Santa Barbara, is a nationally-recognized leader in the field of bilingual education. He has worked at the Center for Applied Linguistics as well as at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. He has taught at the University of California, Davis and has been a consultant for the Peace Corps. He has directed various teacher-training programs in bilingual education.

The National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education is pleased to have this publication form part of its information products series. Subsequent Clearinghouse products will similarly seek to contribute information and knowledge which can assist in the education of minority culture and language groups in the United States.

INTRODUCTION

Child-language acquisition studies have been limited both in number as well as in the number of languages (mostly limited to English); the Mexican-American child's acquisition of his native Spanish has been virtually ignored. For bilingual education today, we believe such studies are necessary in order to design curriculum materials that are suitable in language structure for children at the different age levels from age three to age five. If a bilingual program is to be effective, it must employ structures that the child is able to manipulate and produce; otherwise, efforts to instruct the child will be hampered. It is the main purpose of this study to provide information which can serve as guidelines for curriculum designers, materials developers, and others concernced with pre-school programs for Spanish-speakers. In addition, it provides a set of tentative norms for language development which should be considered in student placement, achievement testing, and program evaluation. Finally, it documents the unequivocal evidence that Spanish-speaking children in Texas, far from having "no grammar," or a "mixed up language," as has sometimes been alleged, in fact, have a well-developed grammar which is entirely Spanish by the time they are three.

This study was undertaken for the purpose of determining the normal sequence of development of Spanish phonology and Spanish grammatical patterns in the speech of native Spanish-speaking children between the ages of two and five. The researcher hoped to determine what syntactic structures are characteristic of each age level and what the range of language variability is for each chronological age level.

This report focuses exclusively on the grammatical patterns present at each age level; phonology is treated only if it is part of a grammatical deviation. This cross-sectional study follows the development of several informants from selected age levels between two and five years of age, and this procedure provides some indication of the range of grammatical structures present at the different age intervals; showing change in structure from one age level to the next higher one.

Owing to limitations of time and money, only two males and two females were interviewed from each of the following age intervals (given in years and months): 2.0, 2.6, 2.9, 3.0, 3.6, 4.0, 4.6, 5.0, 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, and 10.0. The decision to use more than one child at each age level was based on the desire to obtain a representative sample of child language at that level; using the speech of one child as representative of an age level could be very misleading. The results presented are based on the analysis of three of the four informants interviewed at each age level; only the age levels between ages two and five are examined in this report.

In order to secure a language sample which was representative of the area of investigation and which would provide a picture of normal language development, only children from middle-class status were selected. Middle-class status was defined solely on an annual income basis. The informants were children whose parents earned between $4500 and $20,000 a year. Children from lower socio-economic families were excluded because of the adverse effect their socio-economic status might have on their language development. Upper-class native Spanish-speaking children were not selected because they

form such a small minority in this area of investigation that it would have been very difficult to obtain informants at all at the desired age levels.

The area of investigation was the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, specifically the communities of Brownsville, San Benito, and Harlingen, Texas, all within twenty-five miles of each other. This area was chosen because it has long had a stable middle-class Mexican-American group which has shown greater language maintenance than is true elsewhere in the state. Each informant was required to speak Spanish as opposed to only understanding it. Each informant was interviewed for a total of approximately two hours. It was necessary to divide this total into convenient 30- or 40-minute intervals since the child's attention span is far less than the total time.

The elicitation technique used in the study is basically conversational. Materials of different types were used in the elicitation, including dolls, cars, storybooks, and coloring books. The latter seemed to be especially effective with the four- to six-year old age group. The interviewer attempted to elicit certain structures from the child by bringing them into the conversation in such a way as to force the child to use the structure in question.

The first interview with the child did not attempt to elicit any specific structures. It consisted mostly of general questions about the family, home and everyday activities. The second interview concentrated on verb tenses and moods. The final interview included a morphology test which utilizes Spanish nonsense words. Also included in the final interview was an experimental test in Spanish phonology developed by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, in which the child was asked to repeat

certain sentences which contain all the phonemes and significant allophones of Spanish. Those in the 2.0 to 3.6 age range did not prove tractable in this aspect of the interview.

The interviews were transcribed by two native Spanish-speakers. The transcriptions were reviewed by the researcher before a grammatical analysis was begun. The reader must bear in mind that the language of the same child from age two to age five was not studied. The speech of different Mexican-American children at different chronological ages and varying stages of language development was studied. From this, the grammatical patterns that are representative of each age level could be discovered, and hopefully, show the normal pattern of growth in children's language as it develops from simple utterances to grammatically complex sentences.

This study concerns itself directly with language performance and only indirectly with language competence. Since researchers are dealing with language at its earliest stages and would like to have as much confidence as possible in his conclusions regarding the grammatical structures that the child possessed, they concentrated on performance. If the child's performance indicated ability to manipulate a certain structure, it could be taken as certain that it was present in the child's internalized competence model. Another reason for focusing on performance was the relative ease of interpretation. A good number of responses, especially among the 2.0 and 2.6 age groups, would have been difficult to interpret within the framework of competence.

The study is organized as follows: each age group is presented as a

separate chapter. Each chapter presents the syntactic structures found in that age group, a discussion of the development of certain grammatical features of interest, and a look at the deviations encountered at the age level under study. Note, however, that this summary will not include the deviations. Formulation of the linguistic processes encountered (such as the question transformation) will be mentioned only in passing.

Examples are given for almost every structure. This summary will include only one example under each structure instead of the three (one per informant) that were presented in an earlier study by Gonzalez.[1]

[1]Gonzalez, Gustavo. The Acquisition of Spanish Grammar by Native Speakers. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, Austin, 1970.

CHAPTER I

CHILDREN - AGE 2.0

The following structures were encountered in the speech of two-year old children (age 2.0). Parenthesized items represent elements that are optional in the surface structure of Spanish sentences.

(1) (SUBJECT) - SER - NOUN PHRASE

"Son pollos."

(They're chickens.)

(2) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Está allá."

(It's over there.)

(3) LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"Ahí* ta (está) calo (carro)."

(The car is over there.)

(4) (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR

"Rudy qui (aquí) ta (está)."

(Rudy is here.)

(5) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - ADJECTIVES

"Ta weno (bueno)."

(It's good.)

(6) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB

"Juan se va."

(Juan is leaving.)

(7) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB

"Me quemé."

(I burned myself.)

(8) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Jue pa allá."

(He went over there.)

(9) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - INTRANSITIVE VERB

"Horita viene."

(He's coming shortly.)

(10) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB

"Lloró."

(He cried.)

(11) (SUBJECT) - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Quero (quiero) colors."

(I want some colors.)

(12) (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Mía (mira), ahi tiene su coke."

(Look, he has his coke there.)

(13) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Lo rompo."

(I'm tearing it.)

* Although the standard written form is accented, the accent is omitted here and in the rest of the examples to reflect to pronunciation (ay).

In addition to the preceding constructions, there were some that may be regarded as requiring at least one grammatical transformation for their formation. Among them were the following:

(14) NEGATION: NO

"No quelo (quiero)."

(I don't want any.)

(15) IMPERATIVE: VERB ONLY

"Toma."

(Take it.)

(16) IMPERATIVE: VERB + DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN

"Mátalos."

(Kill them.)

(17) INTERROGATIVE: INTONATION

"Mami, ¿oto (otro)?"

(Mommy, one more?)

(18) INTERROGATIVE: QUESTION WORD ONLY

"¿Qué?"

(What?)

(19) INTERROGATIVE: SENTENCE

"¿Qué es esto?"

(What is this?)

Of the total 19 structures, informant #1 exhibited 13 of them, informant #2 exhibited 10 and informant #2 exhibited 12. For the most part, the constructions encountered were short and grammatically simple. No subject pronouns were evident in any of the examples. Only present indicative forms were encountered in the area of verb tenses, although the preterit indicative was present in rare instances.

The Spanish equivalents of English to be, ser and estar, are used appropriately even at this early age. Adverbial modification consisted by and large of single locative adverbs (ahí, allá, aquí). Only one example of temporal modification (Horita viene) was found.

Interrogatives appeared in three forms. The first type of interrogative has the same syntactic structure as a declarative sentence, but has rising instead of falling pitch at the end. The second type of question was that consisting only of the question word (qué, dónde, por qué), uttered in an appropriate context. The third variety encountered was the full-sentence information question, complete with subject (explicit or implicit), verb and question word.

Imperatives appeared in two varieties in the data: with and without a direct object pronoun attached to the verb, and with both affirmative and negative forms (sí and no, respectively) present.

On the average, the informants used about eleven structures, with varying degrees of frequency. It can be stated with some assurance that the child at this point has gone beyond the labeling stage, but barely. He uses a few verbs in limited tenses, always in proper contexts. He has limited ability to put certain syntactics units together to form a sentence. The verb forms are correctly inflected for the intended person at this age, indicating that the child already possesses an agreement transformation. In addition to the above operation, the child seems to possess at least the question and negation transformations, and possibly the imperative transformation and deletion process. There was limited use of the definite article; most of the instances of this were deviant with respect to gender. There was no evidence of use of the plural definite article. Although the data is admittedly limited, it is the researcher's impression that the child does not possess productive morphological patterns at this time.

CHAPTER II

CHILDREN - AGE 2.6

There is a considerable increase in both the number and the complexity of the children's syntactic patterns at age 2.6. Among the syntactic patterns observed are the following:

(1) (SUBJECT) - SER - NOUN PHRASE

"Es un gatito."

(It's a kitty.)

(2) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Mi mamá está en la casa."

(My mother is in the house.)

(3) (LOCATIVE ADVERB) - ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"Ahí sta."

(There he is.)

(4) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - ADJECTIVE

"Está muy chiflado."

(He's very spoiled.)

(5) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - ADVERB

"Yo no jugué con Mano."

(I didn't play with Mano.)

(6) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"Sí, me caí."

(Yes, I fell down.)

(7) INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT) - (LOCATIVE ADVERB)

"Sí jui yo aca (a casa de) Nana."

(Yes, I went to Nana's house.)

(8) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - INTRANSITIVE VERB - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Horita vamos a los swings."

(Now we're going to the swings.)

(9) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Poque (porque) se enoja tu mamá."

(Because your mother gets angry.)

(10) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - INTRANSITIVE VERB

"Oita (ahorita) vengo."

(I'll be back shortly.)

(11) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB

"Yo me asusté."

(I got scared.)

(12) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Se está bajando este señor."

(This man is getting down.)

(13) (SUBJECT) - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Ese tiene muchas letras."

(That one has many letters.)

(14) VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Pero sí tiene letras ése."

(But that one does have letters.)

(15) (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT

"...ya no tiene Mami otos (otros)."

(Mommy doesn't have any more.)

(16) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Mama no lo caga (carga)."

(Mother doesn't carry him.)

(17) DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"La agarró esta muchachita."

(This little girl got it.)

(18) TEMPORAL ADVERB - (SUBJECT) - VERB - (DIRECT OBJECT)

"Ahorita tengo tomate."

(Right now I have some tomatoes.)

(19) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Me está pintando los zapatos."

(He's polishing my shoes.)

(20) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (ADVERB)

"Eshe (ése) me lo quitó otra vez."

(That one took it away from me again.)

(21) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Me lo comí."

(I ate it.)

If only syntactic patterns (and not grammatical processes) are included, an increase from a maximum of eleven structures at age 2.0 to the present twenty-one structures is noticed. In view of the rapid increase in the size of the inventory, the writer decided to limit the information just to syntactic structures. Informant #1 exhibited a total of 3 structures, informant #2 - 14 structures, and informant #3 exhibited a total of 17 structures.

Several significant changes occur from 2.0 to 2.6. The number of structures incorporating the direct object increased from two to five. There was more flexibility as to the location of the direct object. All possible variations of the SUBJECT - VERB - OBJECT structure were found. In addition

to this, pronominalization of the direct object increased from one patterns (#13) and one occurrence in 2.0 to four patterns in 2.6 (#16, 17, 20, and 21). In addition to its position between subject and verb, the direct object pronoun, like the direct object, was flexible. It also appeared in the beginning of a sentence (#17).

It will be recalled that most of the verb forms at 2.0 were in the present indicative tense, with a few forms in the preterit indicative. At 2.6, in addition to increased use of the two tenses above, the following tenses were noticed: Imperfect Indicative, Present Progressive, Past Progressive, Past Perfect, Periphrastic (ir a + infinitive) Future, and Present Subjunctive. The informants thus appear to possess the ability to express themselves in the three major time divisions: the present, the past, and the future.

The negative with no occurred quite frequently, especially full sentence negation. At age 2.0, only one example of sentence negation was evident. The child by now has apparently mastered this aspect of adult grammar.

Three question types were also evident at this level in the speech of all our informants. There were full-sentence information questions, one-word informations, yes-no questions in full sentence form (one occurrence). Full sentence information questions now contained a wider variety of question words. Previously, the only question words utilized in this type of interrogative were qué, and dónde; the present level includes para qué, cuándo, quién, por qué, and cómo. The appearance of cuándo (occurrence in only one informant) could indicate that the child is beginning to become aware of and use time-related structures in spite of limited vocabulary. Since only one informant used it at this level, it can only be concluded that it is possible

but not necessarily characteristic of the 2.6 age group. The data showed, however, that the child is able to handle all three varieties of questions and the transformations involved in each, from the simplest to the most complex.

In Spanish, there are two ways of indicating possession. One is through the use of possessive adjectives; the other is through the use of de + noun phrase. The previous age level included some of the former but none of the latter. Age 2.6 saw the initial use of the de + noun phrase.

The imperatives became more complex at this level. Paralleling the appearance of the indirect object pronoun in the syntactic patterns (structures #19 and 20), the emergence of the same pronouns in imperatives is seen. All three informants shared the verb + indirect object imperative structure. The commands consisting solely of a verb form were present, but only in the speech of two of the informants. The verb + direct object pronoun form of the imperative was found in only one informant possibly as a result of sampling error, since informants possessed it at 2.0.

Other varieties emerged. One of these involved a verb form plus a reflexive pronoun. Perhaps, the most complex of all imperatives was the verb + indirect object pronoun + direct object pronoun. Only one occurrence was noted in the three informants: "Préstamelo." (Lend it to me.) This same informant possessed the syntactic pattern that utilized both of these pronouns (#19 and 20). The investigator would not posit the verb + indirect object pronoun + direct object pronoun structure as indicative of the child's language development at this time.

At 2.6, adverbial modification became more sophisticated. Temporal adverbs in the guise of horita (ahorita) and ya were in evidence for the first time in the speech of two different informants; horita was shared by both. This small number of temporal adverbs could be interpreted as evidence of an emerging grammatical category. The previous observation on the occurrence of dónde would support this. The data suggest that, compared to verb tenses, corresponding temporal adverbial modifiers develop late.

Transformations were present and helped to create more complex sentences. Probably the most common in terms of occurrence is the series of transformations that produce the verb + infinitive structure. Although the structure is superficially simple, it may be analyzed as resulting from the blending of two separate sentences (to form one).

One compound sentence was noted in the speech of one informant: "Ya no voy a dár a Nana pa que se acaban y ya no tiene Mami otos." (I won't give any more to Nana because there'll be no more and Monny doesn't have any more.) One example of a relative clause was also found: "Están unas tijeras que están comidas." (There are some scissors that are chipped (eaten up).) A related structure, the use of a noun clause as direct object, was common to two informants. Both types of structures may be analyzed as containing embedded sentences.

For a person learning Spanish as a second-language, perhaps the most difficult from a semantic point of view was the use of the reflextive pronoun for unplanned occurrences. Beginning students of Spanish are normally puzzled about this structure and its use; the informants apparently had no problem at all with it.

Other grammatical processes were present at 2.6 and deserve mention. Substantivization, the process that converts adjective + noun phrases into nouns by deleting the head noun, was common to two of the informants. Elements that underwent this process included demonstrative adjectives, possessives, and even a noun clause.

The use of special pronoun forms with con appeared for the first time: both -migo ("Vienen conmigo" - They're coming with me.) and -tigo ("Se enoja contigo." - He gets angry with you.) each was used by a different child. Special verbs, those that require special treatment for one reason or another, made their initial appearance. Among those were picarle, haber, gustarle, and dolerle.

The use of the definite article was widespread, and there were numerous instances of use of the plural article with nouns properly inflected in the plural. It will be recalled that the plural articles and nouns were absent at level 2.0. Finally, in the corpus of the investigation, one example of comparison of similarities was noted, the first comparison structure to appear in the sample. Other variations are expected to be seen as the informants become more linguistically mature.

CHAPTER III

CHILDREN - AGE 2.9

The variety and complexity of structures continue to increase at this level. The range of syntactic patterns includes:

(1) (SUBJECT) - SER - NOUN PHRASE

"Este es el baño."

(This is the bathroom.)

(2) (SUBJECT) - SER - ADJECTIVE

"Este es mío."

(This is mine.)

(3) SER - ADJECTIVE - (SUBJECT)

"Son míos los colores."

(The colors are mine.)

(4) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR- ADJECTIVE

"Está muy pesado."

(It's very heavy.)

(5) ESTAR - ADJECTIVE - (SUBJECT)

"Ta dormira (dormida) baby."

(The baby is asleep.)

(6) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Tan (están) en el closet."

(They're in the closet.)

(7) LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"Aquí está Mélinda."

(Mélinda is here.)

(8) (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Oyita (ahorita) viene Virginia."

(Virginia is coming now.)

(9) LOCATIVE ADVERB - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Aquí voy a jugar yo."

(I'm going to play here.)

(10) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB

"Yo me senté."

(I sat down.)

(11) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB

"Ya se salió."

(He already went out.)

(12) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Ya se va para allá, pala (para abajo)."

(He's already going there down there.)

(13) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Se jue el muchachito en el agua."

(The little boy went in the water.)

(14) TEMPORAL ADVERB - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Ya se va la casa."

(The house is leaving.)

(15) (SUBJECT) - (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB

"Ya se lompió (rompió)."

(It tore already.)

(16) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Me subí yo."

(I got up (climbed).)

(17) (SUBJECT) - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (LOCATIVE ADVERB)

"Tengo un dulce a la casa."

(I have candy at home.)

(18) VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT

"Tengo yo también dos."

(I have two also.)

(19) VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Perdió la llanta el bos."

(The bus lost a tire.)

(20) (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Ahí no tiene nada."

(He has nothing there.)

(21) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Se estaban comiendo todos los huevos."

(They were eating all the eggs.)

(22) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (LOCATIVE ADVERB)

"La vas a baratar (desbaratar) allá."

(You are going to break it (take it apart) over there.)

(23) DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"La pintó mi apá (papá)."

(My father painted it.)

(24) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Ya lo sé."

(I already know it.)

(25) (SUBJECT) - (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Ya me lo quité."

(I already took it off.)

(26) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Yo no le voy a prestar éste."

(I'm not going to lend him this one.)

(27) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"...le da vuelta el pato."

(The duck goes around it.)

(28) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Mami me la pintó."

(Mommy colored it for me.)

(29) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Me la compró daddy."

(Daddy bought it for me.)

(30) REDUNDANT DIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"A mí me uta (gusta)."

(I like it.)

A total number of structures appearing is now thirty. As in 2.6, one of the informants seems to be lagging in development compared to the other two. Whereas informant #2 had nineteen patterns, and informant #3 - twenty-one patterns, informant #1 had a total count of ten.

Of the new structure, three dealt with ser or estar (#2, 3, 5) showing that all possible combinations of these first verbs have apparently not been exhausted. The reflexive pronoun was used for the first time in a construction

with the direct object (#21). Direct object and indirect object pronouns were used to a greater extent, from a combined total of five patterns to the present total of eight.

No new verb tenses appeared at this level. The imperfect indicative was present in the speech of two informants, but only in the irregular verb forms: era and iba. The tense does not appear to be established as a productive grammatical tense. All in all, eight tenses have made their appearance in the informants' speech from age 2.0 to 2.9.

Full-sentence negation with no was frequent in the speech of all three informants. In addition to this, nada was noted once in the speech of each informant and tampoco, the inclusive negative was shared by two. One subject went beyond the above negatives adding the conjunction ni, the indefinite nominal nadie, and the temporal adverbial nunca to the list.

It should be pointed out that the use of negatives other than no is subject to certain conditions. Nada never occurs as the sole negative in a sentence; it is preceded by no ("Ahí no tiene nada." - He doesn't have anything there.) Hence its acquisition involves the acquisition also of the negative concord transformation. Other negatives do not depend so heavily on no. They can occur as lone negatives preceding the verb. The informants seemed quite capable of handling both no and other negatives.

All three types of questions were present. Especially abundant is the full-sentence information question. Con quién, de quién, and cuál make their initial appearance in full-sentence information questions. Qué, dónde, quién, and por qué continue to be frequent in terms of occurrence. Although not all

question words have carried over from the previous age group, there is ample evidence that the question pattern is well established.

The de + noun phrase in possessives was common to all informants and is established. The post-noun forms of the possessive, noted in substantivized forms, appear for the first time.

All imperative patterns found in 2.0 and 2.6 were noted in all three informants at 2.9. Two informants used the verb + indirect object pronoun + direct object pronoun construction once apiece. New to this level was the construction verb + reflexive pronoun + direct object pronoun ("Tómatela tú." You drink it.) The subject pronoun (corresponding to the person spoken to) was used in commands in both pre- and post-construction positions. "Tú canta." (You sing.) and "Muévela tú." ((You) move it.)

Locative adverbs are well established. Horita and ya continue to be the mainstays of the temporal adverbs. One informant added a new degree of complexity to the locative adverbs: the adverb clause ("Por qué no se sube por acá donde se va el pajarito?" - Why doesn't he climb up through here as the bird does?).

The verb + infinitive construction, introduced in 2.6, continued to be the most popular complex construction. One informant twice used a compound sentence construction with y. Complex sentences were created through use of a noun clause as a direct object.

The reflexive construction for reporting unplanned occurrences was found in two informants. Substantivization appeared in all three of the informants

and appears to be well-established by now. Special verbs now totaled six. The only new special verbs since 2.6 are quedarle and andarle.

Repetition of the direct object by means of a pronoun was seen for the first time. Comparison of similarities was found again in one informant and a parallel structure utilizing igual que was found in a different informant. The occurrence of these constructions was not great enough to allow the writer to reach any conclusion about the child's acquisition of this concept.

The impersonal reflexive, a grammatical construction used to express abstract generalizations such as in the English forms, "One does not do that sort of thing" or "It is not done" was encountered for the first time. This appears to be an emerging structure, one not yet established in the child's repertoire.

The personal a, used in constructions before direct object that refer to persons was noted once for the first time here. ("Yo quiero peinar a Rebeca" - I want to comb Rebecca.)

CHAPTER IV

CHILDREN - AGE 3.0

The present level included the following structures:

(1) (SUBJECT) - SER - NOUN PHRASE

"Estos son los gatos."

(These are the cats.)

(2) SER - NOUN PHRASE - (SUBJECT)

"No es tu muchacha Lolis."

(It's not your girl Lolis.)

(3) (SUBJECT) - SER - ADJECTIVE

"Ella es muy loca."

(She is very crazy.)

(4) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - ADJECTIVE

"¿Y él no está cansado?"

(And isn't he tired?)

(5) ESTAR - ADJECTIVE - (SUBJECT)

"Están quebrados también ésos."

(Those are also broken.)

(6) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - LOCATIVE VERB

"Está en la escuela."

(He's in school.)

(7) LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"¿Dónde está mi huila?"

(Where is my kite?)

(8) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Sí juega allá ajuera (afuera)."

(He does play over there, outside.)

(9) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - MANNER ADVERB

"Caminaba así."

(He walked like this.)

(10) (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Ya se va ota (otra)."

(Another one is already leaving.)

(11) LOCATIVE ADVERB - TEMPORAL ADVERB - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Pa la casa ya me voy."

(I'm going home now.)

(12) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Me duermo yo aquí."

(I sleep here.)

(13) TEMPORAL ADVERB - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Hora juimos al cine."

(We went to the movies today.)

(14) (SUBJECT) - (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Ya me voy para fuera (afuera)."

(I am going outside now.)

(15) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB - (MANNER ADVERB)

"Yo me quemé pa (con) la plancha."

(I burned myself with the iron.)

(16) (SUBJECT) - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"Ta haciendo los ojos así."

(He's making (moving) his eyes like this.)

(17) DIRECT OBJECT - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Un traje de baño va a comprarme mi mamá."

(My mother is going to buy me a bathing suit.)

(18) VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"No tiene yentes (dientes) él."

(He doesn't have any teeth.)

(19) VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT

"Tiene daddy éte, mira."

(Look, daddy has this one.)

(20) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Me quemé mi cotaya (cortada)."

(I burned my cut.)

(21) (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Ya se acabaron toda la comida Lolis y Hugo."

(Lolis and Hugo already ate all the food.)

(22) (SUBJECT) - TRANSITIVE VERB

"Los zapatitos aprietan."

(The little shoes are tight.)

(23) (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - ADVERB - (MANNER ADVERB) - (SUBJECT)

"Ta rayando muy feo Georgie."

(Georgie is scribbling badly). (in an ugly manner).

(24) (SUBJECT) - (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Ya lo componí (compuse)."

(I already fixed it.)

(25) TEMPORAL ADVERB - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"A veces me pega Lolis."

(Lolis spanks me sometimes.)

(26) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Ya se lo acabó."

(He already finished it.)

(27) DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"La compró Nena."

(Nena bought it.)

(28) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (LOCATIVE ADVERB)

"¿Tú me llevas pa la escuela?"

(Will you take me to school?)

(29) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Olga me compró uno."

(Olga bought one for me.)

(30) DIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Eta me va a compá (comprar) mi papá."

(My father is going to buy me this one.)

(31) REDUNDANT INDIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"A mí no me van a enseñar a (la) pistola."

(They are not going to show the gun to me.)

(32) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"¿Ya te quemó a ti?"

(Did it already burn you?)

(33) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT

"No le echó agua a su caballo."

(He did not give his horse any water.)

Informant #1 exhibited 27 structures, Informant #2 - 19 structures, and Informant #3 exhibited 16. Modification of pronouns through use of a + noun phrase (structures #31, 32, and 33) increased in frequency and variety. There was still none, however, that occurred more than twice in any informant's speech.

The noun phrase may be a noun or a pronoun; it may refer to the direct object or indirect object pronoun of the sentence. This construction was found in sentence-final position (#32 and 33) in addition to its sentence-initial position in 2.9.

The present progressive and the periphrastic future continue in sufficient numbers to allow the writer to conclude that they are definitely established by this age. Two tenses, the present subjunctive and the imperfect indicative, were used by all three of our informants, indicating that these were en route to being established.

Three tenses made their initial appearance in the most advanced informant (#1): present perfect; past subjunctive and the conditional. The past progressive was used by two children and the andar progressive made one appearance. Another form of progressive, ir + -ndo made its initial appearance.

Negation with no has unquestionably been established by now. The three children used it quite often. Two of them also used nada, two used the personal negative nadie once apiece. The negative inclusive ni made one appearance.

Yes-no questions, interrogative word, and full-sentence information questions were evident in convincing numbers. All yes-no questions were full sentences. Full-sentence information questions were the predominant type of interrogative. The favorite type of full-sentence information question utilized dónde as the question word.

Qué, quién, and por qué were used in full-sentence information questions by two of the three informants.

Both means of expressing possession were encountered, the de + noun phrase being common to all three informants. Post-noun possessives noted included mío, mía, and tuyo.

The imperatives in general appear more firmly established. All informants used the verb + indirect object pronoun structure, the verb + direct object structure, and the combination of the two, the verb + indirect object pronoun + direct object pronoun. It will be remembered that only one occurrence of the combination was noted at 2.6, compared to the present overall total of six.

The verb + reflexive pronoun + direct object pronoun found earlier at age 2.9, was absent at this stage, but a similar imperative, minus direct object pronoun, made one appearance ("Espérate" - Wait.). It is entirely possible that it was learned as a single lexical unit. Negative commands were in evidence in the speech of Informant #1.

Phrases as locative adverbs became more common. Adverb clauses introduced by porque appeared for the first time. Another type of adverb clause, locative in nature, was noted once at this level. Adverb clauses do not seem ready to emerge as sophisticated adverb forms.

Coordinate compound sentences were used by two informants. As in 2.9, two informants used noun clauses to form complex sentences; the use of the noun clauses was in all cases in the function of a direct object. One informant used the relative adjective clause once.

All the informants utilized the reflexive for unplanned occurrences, with varying degrees of frequency. A new member, the conditional clause with si, appeared in two of the children's speech.

Substantivizations are present in the sample of the three-year-olds; demonstrative adjectives seem to be the most popular objects of this process. Special verbs incorporated two new members, pegarle and echarle. Dolerle was noted once in the speech of all three informants.

Repetition of the direct object through use of a pronoun continued in two informants. Comparison through use of más was observed here for the first time; all three instances were in the speech of Informant #1. Pronoun forms (con)migo and (con)tigo were noted in the speech of two informations. The personal a, encountered only once at 2.9, occurs twice at this level, both times in the speech of the same child. The impersonal reflexive was observed in the speech of two subjects and the overall total seemed to increase over that of the previous age level.

The purposive a, a construction that involves a transformation similar to that which creates the verb + infinitive structure, was noted for the first time here, once each in the speech of two informants.

CHAPTER V

CHILDREN - AGE 3.3

At this level we see a slight increase in the variety of structures that the informants are capable of producing. These include:

(1) (SUBJECT) - SER - NOUN PHRASE

"El mío también es tendajo."

(Mine is also a store.)

(2) (SUBJECT) - SER - ADJECTIVE

"Es chiquito."

(It's small.)

(3) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - ADJECTIVE

"Está mojado."

(He's wet.)

(4) ESTAR - ADJECTIVE - (SUBJECT)

"Está abierta la botica."

(The drug store is open.)

(5) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Ella estaba aquí."

(She was here.)

(6) LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"Ahi está un burro."

(There's a donkey over there.)

(7) ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB - (SUBJECT)

"Ta aquí oto (otro)."

(Another one is here.)

(8) (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR

"Aquí está adentro."

(He's in here.)

(9) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Ando mucho en el solecito."

(I'm in the sun a lot.)

(10) LOCATIVE ADVERB - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"...ahí va Santa Clos."

(There goes Santa Claus.)

(11) INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT) - (LOCATIVE ADVERB)

"Vive Rebeca allá."

(Rebecca lives over there.)

(12) (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB - INTRANSITIVE VERB

"Ahí voy."

(There I go.)

(13) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (LOCATIVE ADVERB)

"...me resbalé en la tierra."

(I slipped on the ground.)

(14) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB

"El doctor ya se fue."

(The doctor already left.)

(15) (SUBJECT) - MANNER ADVERB - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB

"Asina se para."

(He stops like this.)

(16) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"El se desamarra con la pata."

(He unties himself with his foot.)

(17) TEMPORAL ADVERB - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Se cuelgan los pájaros ahi."

(The birds are hung over there.)

(18) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Me escondí abajo de las sillas."

(I hid under the chairs.)

(19) (SUBJECT) - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Yo prendo la luz."

(I turn on the light.)

(20) DIRECT OBJECT - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Todos los carros tengo."

(I have all the cars.)

(21) VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT

"Voy a pintar yo éste."

(I'm going to color this one.)

(22) VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"No taygo (traigo) zapato yo."

(I'm not wearing a shoe.)

(23) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT - VERB

"Este no quiero."

(I don't want this one.)

(24) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"No se llama tienda."

(It's not called a store.)

(25) (SUBJECT) - (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - TRANSITIVE VERB - ADVERB

"Horita (ahorita) voy a buscar más para acá."

(Now I'm going to look for more over here.)

(26) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (LOCATIVE ADVERB)

"Yo sí lo sé."

(I do know it.)

(27) DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Lo voy a quitar yo."

(I'm going to take it off.)

(28) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Después lo muerde."

(He bites him afterwards.)

(29) (SUBJECT) - (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Ya se las acabó."

(He already finished them.)

(30) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Una señora me dió una curita."

(A lady gave me a band-aid.)

(31) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Me compró un shoe mi mamá."

(My mother bought me a shoe.)

(32) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Se lo digo."

(I'll tell him.)

(33) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"A mi mamá le voy a dicir (decir)."

(I am going to tell my mother.)

(34) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - INDIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT

"Le voy a decir a mamá que me dijo eso."

(I'm going to tell mother that he told me that.)

The insignificant increase in the number of syntactic patterns in going from level 3.0 to 3.3 could indicate that the child has reached a peak in the variety of linguistic patterns. This suggests that by this age, the normally-developing child has acquired most of the major syntactic structures that he is likely to acquire during his lifetime. This investigation shows that this is certainly true up to the age of 5.0.

Informant #1 exhibited 24 structures, Informant #2, 26 structures; and Informant #3 exhibited 19 structures. The imperfect indicative was encountered frequently in the speech of Informant #3 and infrequently with Informant #2; Informant #1 did not use it at all. The same two informants used the present subjunctive frequently and in a variety of situations. The past subjunctive was used once by Informant #2 and four times by Informant #3. It is yet to be firmly established in the child's grammar. The conditional and the present perfect were not noted once in any informant at this age level. The past progressive tense was also limited to two informants as was the ir + -ndo form of the progressive. There was no occurrence of the andar progressive.

The only new tense was the periphrastic future progressive, which appeared once in one informant.

The negative no was found in convincing numbers in all three informants, in full-sentence negation. In addition to this, there was one occurrence each

of the negative inclusive tampoco, the temporal nunca, and nada. There seemed to be fewer negatives in the sample than in previous age levels.

All three types of interrogatives were in evidence. Again the type with smallest incidence of occurence is the interrogative-work question. Yes-no questions had a slightly greater frequency. Full-sentence information questions made the greatest number of appearances of the interrogative types.

Informant #2 introduces a new type of interrogative, the tag question - "Estas niñas se pintan así, ¿verdad?" - (These girls are colored like this, right?) The writer believes that the reason for the late appearance of this question type is sampling error rather than lack of development in the child's speech. In terms of transformational difficulty, this type of question may be interpreted as involving fewer changes than the full-sentence information question type that has been in evidence since age 2.6.

Both pre-noun and post-noun possessive forms were used, the former more often than the latter. Post-nominal forms were noted in the speech of two informants. Only the forms mío and mía were in evidence. These same two informants were the only ones to use the de + noun phrase possessive construction.

Two patterns of imperatives were found in the speech of all three informants: verb + direct object pronoun and the verb + indirect object pronoun. A variety of verbs was used in each type, only one of which occurred more than once (mirar). Commands consisting only of the verb were relatively rare as was the pattern verb + reflexive pronoun. There were several instances of negative commands but all occurred in the speech of one informant. Verb +

indirect object pronoun + direct object pronoun was encountered in the speech of two informants only.

A new addition to imperatives was the indirect command. As with the negative commands, all examples of the indirect command were noted in the speech of only one informant.

The most significant changes were observed in adverbial modification. The adverb clause appeared frequently in the speech of two informants. Temporal adverb clauses emerged for the first time, giving adverbial modification a new dimension of expression. Example: "Cuando venga Benito, voy a volar la huila." - (When Benito comes, I'm going to fly the kite.) It will be noticed that the present subjunctive rather than the present indicative is used. This suggests that these children have acquired the context-sensitive rule that in this type of Spanish construction, the subjunctive is used if the main verb is in the future. Adverb clauses introduced by porque were limited to one occurrence.

Compound sentences appeared in the speech of two informants. Noun clauses as direct objects were encountered in all three children's speech. Two informants went one step further, utilizing a noun clause as a predicate noun. The relative (adjective) clause was used by all three. The verb + infinitive structure was, likewise, common to the three informants. A similar structure, tener que + infinitive, occurred here for the first time.

Two of the three informants used the reflexive for unplanned occurrences construction frequently. The same two used the conditional clause with si. The latter construction appears to be on its way to being well established.

One subject introduced a new structure, es que + sentence. This consists of embedding a declarative sentence after es que. The construction is the equivalent of English It's just that + sentence. In this new structure, the es que remains invariant.

Substantivizations continue in strong fashion. One subject exhibited a substantivized plural with los que and the more generalized lo que.

New members to the category of special verbs were ganarle, faltarle, and correrle. Haber, not a newcomer to the group, was shared by all. Repetition of the direct object by means of a direct object pronoun was observed. The se form of the indirect object pronoun, found only immediately preceding a direct object pronoun beginning with /l/, also appeared for the first time. Of the pronoun forms that combine with con, only -migo was present.

The impersonal reflexive was found in sufficient numbers in the speech of all three of the subjects to indicate that it is established by this level. The purposive a structure was found twice, both times in the speech of one subject. Comparisons with más and cómo were observed in small numbers.

CHAPTER VI

CHILDREN - AGE 3.6

This age level represents the chronological mid-point of this study. The following structures were encountered:

(1) (SUBJECT) - SER - NOUN PHRASE

"Este es un queque, verdad?"

(This is a cake, right?)

(2) (SUBJECT) - SER - ADJECTIVE

"Es muy feo."

(He's very ugly.)

(3) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - ADJECTIVE

"Está pesado."

(It's heavy.)

(4) ESTAR - ADJECTIVE - (SUBJECT)

"Está mala mi mamá."

(My mother is sick.)

(5) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Yo creo que está en la casa."

(I believe he is at home.)

(6) LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"Ahi está la cama."

(There's the bed.)

(7) (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR

"Allá ta (está) ajuera."

(There it is, outside.)

(8) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (LOCATIVE ADVERB)

"Este va arriba, ¿verdad?"

(This one goes on top, right?)

(9) LOCATIVE ADVERB - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Aquí va señor."

(Here goes the gentleman.)

(10) INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Sale corriendo el perro."

(The dog is running out.)

(11) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"Yo me vine pa la escuela."

(I came to school.)

(12) (SUBJECT) - (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB

"El mío ya se quebró."

(Mine already broke.)

(13) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Se quemó Matamoros."

(Matamoros burned down.)

(14) (SUBJECT) - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"No tengo reló (reloj) en la cocina."

(I don't have a clock in the kitchen.)

(15) DIRECT OBJECT - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Ese libo (libro) va a agarrar Joey."

(Joey is going to get that book.)

(16) (ADVERB) - VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT

"Dice mi mamá que yo no tengo Santa Clos."

(My mother says that I don't have a Santa Claus.)

(17) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT - VERB

"Ese no quiero."

(I don't want that one.)

(18) VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Tiene bigotes la tuya y la mía."

(Yours and mine have mustaches.)

(19) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Me voy a poner los zapatos."

(I am going to put on my shoes.)

(20) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB

"Bugs Bunny se llama."

(His name is Bugs Bunny.)

(21) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (ADVERB)

"No la va a poner aquí."

(He is not going to put it here.)

(22) DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"¿Por qué lo va llevando el señor, mami?"

(Why is the man taking him, mommy?)

(23) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Ya la quitaron."

(They already took it away.)

(24) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (ADVERB)

"¿Po qué se la ponía aquí?"

(Why would he put it here?)

(25) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"Me va a comprar la cachucha."

(He's going to buy me the cap.)

(26) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT

"Me va a petá (prestar) David esa bicicleta."

(David is going to lend me that bicycle.)

(27) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Me va a traer un conejo Diosito."

(God is going to bring me a rabbit.)

(28) (SUBJECT) - (ADVERB) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Ya se la compuso."

(He already fixed it for him.)

(29) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - VERB

"A mi papá le ponieron una shot también."

(They also gave a shot to my father.)

(30) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT

"¿Para qué le quitó éstas a Santa Clos?"

(Why did he take these away from Santa Claus?)

(31) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - INDIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT

"¿No me das a mí regalo?"

(Aren't you giving me a gift?)

The total number of structures noted at this level was three less than at the previous level. This seems to support the investigator's earlier observation that the child's observed syntactic inventory has leveled off at around thirty structures. The number of structures observed in a given informant's speech at this level ranged from Informant's #3 twenty-one to Informant's #1 twenty-four and Informant's #2 at twenty-three.

At this level, all informants use the imperfect indicative tense, indicating that it is established in our informants' speech. Only one subject used the present subjunctive although the other children had occasion to use it but failed to do so. Situations in which the subject utilized the tense included noun clauses after querer (with a change of subject), and the temporal adverb clause initiated by cuando.

The past subjunctive was used only once by one informant, whereas two subjects used it a total of five times in the previous group. It apparently has not yet been firmly established in these children' speech. As in 3.3, no examples of conditional or perfect tenses were noted. The present progressive and the periphrastic future were shared by all three informants. The past progressive was not infrequent in the speech of Informant #3. Informant #2 was the only subject at this level who used the andar progressive, the present as well as the past progressive. Two informants used the ir + -ndo progressive; the total number of occurrences is small, however.

One new tense, the imperfect indicative, was established at this level. The present subjunctive, fairly common in 3.0 and 3.3, was found in only one informant at 3.6. Although evidence from the next age level indicates that it is established by 3.6, two out of the three informants did not use it.

It is interesting to note that none of the perfect tenses have been established. The present perfect and past perfect tenses occur sporadically, but never in the speech of more than one informant per age level. The progressive tenses, on the other hand, are comparatively well established. The perfects do not develop along with their progressive counterparts: the present

perfect does not appear to develop at the same time as the present progressive, and so forth.

This lack of parallel development suggests that there is more than tense involved in the development of these aspects of language. The data shows that two progressives are established before any of the perfects. This may be due to the relative complexity of the concepts expressed.

No and negatives other than no were common to our three informants. The informants had internalized the negative concord transformation, since negative sentences containing both no and a second negative were in evidence.

The three types of interrogatives found previously were present in varying degrees of frequency. Full-sentence information questions were the most common type encountered. The shortened form consisting only of a question word was the least common in occurrence. Only one informant used the tag question at this age level. It will be recalled that only one informant used it at 3.3. This raises the possibility that the construction, rather than being absent because of sampling error, has been absent because it has not yet developed. Yes - no questions were shared by all informants.

Two informants used the de + noun phrase possessive construction. The post-noun possessive also occurred only in the speech of two informants. The post-noun form suya appeared for the first time in the speech of one informant in a substantivized construction.

In imperatives, patterns common to three informants include verb + indirect object pronoun and verb + reflexive pronoun. The great majority of reflexive

pronoun constructions involved te; one involved se. Commands involving verb + direct object pronoun were found in the speech of two children as was the command consisting only of a verb form. The same two subjects used the verb + indirect object pronoun + direct object pronoun. The indirect command was again noted in only one informant.

The usted form was used at this level for the first time by only one informant. Up to now, the imperative and other verb forms directed at the interviewer had been in the tú person. The child appeared to use the forms indiscriminately; both usted and tú forms were used with the interviewer.

The temporal adverb clause was present at this level. Only one informant used the construction; one instance utilizing the subjunctive mood and two examples utilizing the present indicative were in evidence. The other two informants seemed to be limited in their expression of temporal sequences to ya. The expansion of this constitutent into a clause has apparently not yet emerged as a productive formation.

Two subjects produced compound sentences; all examples encountered incorporated the conjunction y. The use of a direct noun clause was evident in the three young children. Relator words that introduce the dependent noun clause included que, donde, si and como. There was one instance of a noun clause used as a subject. Two children made frequent use of the relative clause. The pattern consisting of verb + infinitive continued to occur in great numbers. Poder and querer were the most popular verb components in this construction. The tener que + infinitive pattern was not encountered at all.

All three children used the reflexive for unplanned occurrences at least once. The conditional si clause had a single occurrence in the speech of one informant. The preceding age level showed that the construction was about to be established; at this level, the writer has some reservations about this. The es que + sentence was absent from the speech of all subjects in this age-group, although it occurred in the speech of one younger informant, as previously noted.

Substantivization was common throughout the interviews. The post-noun possessive form suya was substantivized for the first time, in one instance ("Yo quebré la suya." - I broke hers.). No new verbs appeared in the special verb category. The pattern involving the repetition of the direct object by means of a direct object pronoun was shared by the three informants. A related structure, repetition of the direct object pronoun itself, made its debut here. Repetition of the indirect object pronoun was not in evidence. The se form of the indirect object pronoun, noted once at 3.3, had a total of five occurrences at this level. Only one subject used both -migo and -tigo with con-.

The impersonal reflexive was encountered in the speech of two of the three informants. The number of occurrences at 3.6 (ten), in addition to its occurrence in the speech of all three subjects at 3.3, allows the writer to state that the use of the reflexive in this sense is pretty well-established. The purposive a construction occurred once apiece in the interviews with two informants. The personal a had only one occurrence. Comparison through the use of más and como was still small in number of occurrences.

CHAPTER VII

CHILDREN - AGE 4.0

The number of structure types did not change significantly from that found at the previous two age levels. Among the syntactic patterns that were encountered were the following:

(1) (SUBJECT) - SER - NOUN PHRASE

"Yo soy hombre."

(I'm a man.)

(2) (SUBJECT) - SER - ADJECTIVE

"Las corbatas son iguales."

(The ties are alike.)

(3) LOCATIVE ADVERB - SER - (SUBJECT)

"Aquí es donde está la cárcel."

(This is where the jail is.)

(4) ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"Ta otra campanita."

(Here's another bell.)

(5) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - ADJECTIVE

"...ése está desbaratado."

(That one is broken.)

(6) ESTAR - ADJECTIVE - (SUBJECT)

"...está grande él."

(He is big.)

(7) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Está en la tienda."

(He's at the store.)

(8) (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR

"El cielo allá está."

(The sky is over there.)

(9) LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"Allá está la pelota."

(There is the ball.)

(10) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - ADVERB

"Vive onde está su casa."

(He lives where his house is.)

(11) (LOCATIVE ADVERB) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Ahí pasa ella."

(She goes through there.)

(12) INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Ta cayendo nieve."

(Snow is falling.)

(13) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"El gato se durmió con la mama..."

(The cat went to sleep with its mother.)

(14) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Se salió el color."

(The color got out.)

(15) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - TRANSITIVE VERB - ADVERB

"Todos los días pintas bien feo."

(Everyday you color badly.)

(16) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"Mi muñeca se sube allí."

(My doll climbs up there.)

(17) (ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Ya se quemó el mercado."

(The market place already burnt down.)

(18) (SUBJECT) - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"Tienen la cola muy grande."

(They have very big tails.)

(19) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"Horita voy a prender el helicóptero."

(I'm going to turn on the helicopter right now.)

(20) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT - VERB

"La Coca Cola no tomo."

(Coca Cola, I don't drink.)

(21) ADVERB - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Ya quebró el carrito Quito."

(Quito broke the car already.)

(22) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"...pa que se meta la pistola."

(...so he can put in the gun.)

(23) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (ADVERB)

"Yo no lo quiero al revés."

(I don't want it inside out.)

(24) DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Lo hicieron los maestros."

(The teacher made it.)

(25) (SUBJECT) - TEMPORAL ADVERB - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Ya lo quitaron."

(They already took it away.)

(26) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (ADVERB)

"...me lo voy a llevar pa la casa..."

(I'm going to take it home.)

(27) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"...se lo comió un gato."

(A cat ate it.)

(28) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"El muchachito le está dando dulce."

(The little boy is giving him candy.)

(29) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT

"Le está diciendo la niña...en ¿donde? está la bolsa "

(The little girl is telling her where the purse is.)

(30) (ADVERB) - (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - ADVERB

"Mi mamá no me la deja desabrochada."

(My mother does not leave it unbottoned for me.)

(31) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Me lo compró mi mamá."

(My mother bought it for me.)

(32) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"A todos los bebitos los mataron."

(They killed all the little babies.)

(33) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - INDIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT

"Quieren decirle a Santa Clos algo."

(They want to tell Santa Claus something.)

(34) (SUBJECT) - ADVERB - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT

"Hora le voy a enseñar esto a usté (usted)."

(Now I am going to show this to you.)

(35) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - INDIRECT OBJECT

"...no se lo puedo a la muñeca..."

(...I cannot ...to the doll.)

Informant #1 exhibited 29 structures, Informant #2 - 27 and Informant #3 exhibited 22 structures. Comparing the 4.0 inventory with that at 3.6, some interesting similarities are noticed. Of the fourteen patterns common to all the children at 3.6, all but two (#12 and 16) are common to all three subjects at 4.0. All fourteen patterns found at the 3.6 level had been observed at 3.3 in the speech of at least two informants. The writer can thus state with some confidence that the fourteen patterns in question (#1, 5, 7, 9, 19, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 26, 28) have been well established by the present age level. Variations in the positioning of syntactic elements do occur, but the data show these fourteen constructions to be the favorite arrangements of the given elements.

One new addition to the syntactic inventory was #3, LOCATIVE ADVERB - SER - (SUBJECT). There were only two occurrences of this. The children appear to be extending the ser + complement pattern to include locative adverbs in addition to the established noun phrase and adjective elements. The appearance of a locative adverb (and not a temporal adverb) at this time is significant; it parallels the origin of adverbs in general (as uncovered in this investigation). It will be recalled that the child's first adverbs (as well as his first adverb

clauses) were locative in nature, and that temporals developed later. The data seem to suggest that adverbs introduced into a new pattern will usually be of the most elementary type, namely, the locatives.

The a + noun phrase expansion in general produced little that was significant other than positional variations. One variation (#32) was noted in the speech of all three informants; it involved the modification of the direct object. The pattern, though not observed in the previous level, is nonetheless not new to the investigation since it had been observed earlier.

Only one new verb form emerged, the inflected future form, and only one occurrence of this was noted. The same informant used the past perfect once and the present perfect; the latter had two more occurrences than the former. The present perfect and the past perfect are not new to the data, having been encountered initially at age 3.0 and 2.6 respectively.

It is worth noting that although the inflected form of the future did occur, the periphrastic future was used more times by the informant to express the idea of futurity. The other two informants used the periphrastic future form exclusively. Dialect work in the same geographical area of South Texas, though limited, has shown the periphrastic future to be the preferred form. The inflected form thus does not appear to be representative of the area under investigation, so that it is not surprising that it should be so late appearing in one informant's speech.

Tenses common to the three informants included: present progressive, past progressive, imperfect indicative, periphrastic future, and the present subjunctive. This last tense was used by only one informant at 3.6, whereas the

present group of informants used it frequently and in a variety of situations. This indicates that the tense is normally well established by 3.6; the low frequency found at 3.6 indicates that perhaps two of the three subjects at that age level were lagging in this aspect of tense development.

The andar progressive was found in the speech of two of the informants. Only one informant utilized both the present and the imperfect forms of the andar auxiliary in formulating progressives.

There were four occurrences of the ir + -ndo construction, all in the speech of the three informants. Full-sentence negation was the most common form of negation. Other negatives included tampoco, nunca, ningún, nada, ni, nadie. Ningún is the newcomer to the area; only one occurrence was noted. All three informants regularly used the negative concord transormation. None of the informants up to this age have failed to use the negative concord where it was required.

Questions consisting solely of a question word continue to decline in frequency of occurrence. Only two instances were noted, both in the speech of the same child. Full-sentence information questions continue to dominate the scene. Question words utilized at this level included qué, pa qué, por qué, dónde, quién, cómo, and cuál. Yes-no questions were encountered in the speech of all three informants. Tag questions were less common than yes-no questions, and were noted only in the speech of two subjects.

Possession by means of de + noun phrase and pre-noun possessives were evident in the three-informant sample. Post-noun forms of these possessives were quite rare, being limited to one occurrence. However, it should be noted

that the forms themselves were not as scarce; they occurred more frequently, but as substantivized forms. The forms themselves thus appear to be established. Their consistent appearance in earlier age levels suggests that their absence here is due not to lack of internalization but to sampling error.

Verb-only commands were noted in the speech of two informants. One of these used both usted and tú forms of commands. The verb + reflexive pronoun imperative was also common, but here no instances of the use of reflexive usted forms were in evidence. All informants used the verb + direct object pronoun construction.

The indirect command was observed twice in the speech of one informant. The negative command was also limited to the same informant, as was the verb + indirect object pronoun + direct object pronoun. The informant seemed to prefer the tú form in this latter structure; with negative command, however, both tú and usted forms were evident. The child seems able to distinguish between the tú negative imperative and the usted negative imperative.

Temporal adverbs now include a greater variety of words and phrases, such as después, el lunes, mañana, and todos los días. Temporal adverb clauses were plentiful in two informant's speech. Two children utilized the locative adverb clause; one alone used the adverb clause as a predicate noun in one instance.

Compound sentences were produced by three informants. Y and pero were used as conjunctions, the latter one common to only two informants. Present in the speech of two informants after an absence in level 3.6 was the es que + sentence construction. All three informants seemed able to use the conditional si clause occurrences. Relative clauses were frequent in the speech of all three children

as were noun clauses. The noun clauses contained verb forms in the indicative mood or the subjunctive mood, depending on the situation. Que, quien, como, and en donde are among the words that introduce the noun clause. Two informants used the noun clause as a subject.

The verb + infinitive construction was used frequently by the three subjects. Querer and poder provide the verb form for more than half of the total number of occurrences. Verb + a + infinitive was encountered in the speech of the three informants, though the occurrence was infrequent. Verb + de + infinitive was likewise infrequent in occurrence. Two informants used it, once apiece. This structure was noted here for the first time, indicating that it may be more complex structurally than the verb + infinitive structure. Another structure involving an infinitive, tener que + infinitive, was observed in two of the subjects, after absence in level 3.6. The reflexive for unplanned occurrences construction was much in evidence in the speech of all the informants.

Substantivization continues to be a popular process in the three informants. Possessives, demonstrative adjectives, and descriptive adjectives were among the forms that were substantivized. No new forms were substantivized. The special verb category did not gain any new members. Haber and faltar were common to all subjects. Repetition of the direct object through a direct object pronoun was noted in the speech of all three informants. Instances in which the direct object preceded the direct pronoun were more common than those in which the direct object pronoun occurred first. The structure involving repetition of the direct object pronoun itself, observed for the first time at level 3.6, was completely absent from the three-informant sample.

The total number of occurrences of the se form of the indirect object

pronoun almost doubled, although the total frequency of the structures incorporating indirect object pronouns remained the same. The three informants produced it a total of nine times. Of the pronoun forms that combine with con-, -migo occurred once each in the speech of two informants. The other form, -tigo, was used only once by the other informant.

The impersonal reflexive was found in the speech of all three informants; each used it a minimum of four times. The personal a was used frequently by one speaker seven times, but it was avoided completely by the other two, as situations calling for its used did not arise. The purposive a construction occurred at least twice in each informant's sample. Comparison through use of más was expressed by the three children. Comparison with como, though not used by all three, has a total incidence of occurrence of seven.

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDREN - AGE 4.6

The informants at this age level showed the following array of linguistic structures:

(1) (SUBJECT) - SER - NOUN PHRASE

"...son los Reyes Magos."

(They're the Three Wise Men.)

(2) SER - (SUBJECT) - NOUN PHRASE

"...es mi hermana Elba la que taba (estaba) aquí."

(It's my sister Elba who was here.)

(3) (SUBJECT) - SER - ADJECTIVE

"...era bien peligrosa."

(It was very dangerous.)

(4) SER - ADJECTIVE - (SUBJECT)

"Era green el papel y la otra cosa."

(The paper was green and so was the other thing.)

(5) (SUBJECT) - SER - ADVERB

"No, porque es de noche."

(No, because it's nighttime.)

(6) TEMPORAL ADVERB - SER - (SUBJECT)

"Ya es Navidad."

(It's already Christmas.)

(7) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - ADJECTIVE

"Están chiquititos."

(They are very, very small.)

(8) ESTAR - ADJECTIVE - (SUBJECT)

"Está enojado el gatito..."

(The kitten is angry.)

(9) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Ta (está) en seguida de la casa."

(It's next to the house.)

(10) LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"Ahí tá (está) el muchachito."

(The little boy is over there.)

(11) (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR

"Ahí ta."

(It's over there.)

(12) ESTAR - (SUBJECT) - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Ta una mesa abajo."

(There is a table under there.)

(13) ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB - (SUBJECT)

"...ta bien lejos la escuela."

(The school is very far.)

(14) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"Yo nací en Austin."

(I was born in Austin.)

(15) (ADVERB) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"A veces sale otro güero..."

(Sometimes another blond comes out.)

(16) (SUBJECT) - (ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"Se va a quedar."

(He's going to stay.)

(17) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT) - (LOCATIVE ADVERB

"Se va Santa Clos a su carro."

(Santa Claus is going to his car.)

(18) (SUBJECT) - TRANSITIVE VERB - ADVERB

"Muerden bastante."

(They bite a lot.)

(19) TRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Pintamos yo y mi hermanita y los hermanitos de ella..."

(My sister, her brothers and I did some coloring.)

(20) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"...se apagó otra vez."

(It went out again.)

(21) (TEMPORAL ADVERB) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB) - (SUBJECT)

"No se metió por la chimenea Santa Clos."

(Santa Claus didn't come in through the chimney.)

(22) (SUBJECT) - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"Las vacas tienen cuernos...aquí."

(The cows have horns...here.)

(23) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT - VERB

"Pescó el wolf a los marranitos."

(The wolf caught the little pigs.)

(24) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT - VERB

"Esos dos tengo."

(I have those two.)

(25) VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Hizo todo mi madrina."

(My godmother made everything.)

(26) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"Se pega la barba con...pegadura."

(He pastes the beard on with paste.)

(27) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (ADVERB)

"...la va a poner en la estufa."

(She's going to put in on the stove.)

(28) DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Me habla mi mamá."

(My mother is calling me.)

(29) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Se lo va a comer."

(He's going to eat it.)

(30) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Si se lo traga un tiburón..."

(If a shark eats him...)

(31) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (ADVERB)

"Pero se me lo acaban de comprar."

(But they just bought it for me.)

(32) (SUBJECT) - (ADVERB) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"Horita en la mañana le lavé un vaso."

(I washed a glass for him now in the morning.)

(33) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Me la va a regalar mi abuelita."

(My grandmother is going to give it to me (as a gift).)

(34) DIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT) - (ADVERB)

"A mi me pegan también."

(They also spank me.)

(35) DIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Al gato lo está viendo el chamaquito."

(The little boy is looking at the cat.)

(36) INDIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"¿A todos les enseñaste eso?"

(Did you show that to everybody?)

(37) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - INDIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT

"...le pedí a Santa Clos una bicicleta."

(I asked Santa Claus for a bicycle.)

(38) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT

"Le tuve montón de miedo a los payasos."

(I was very scared of the clowns.)

The overall total of different structure types has now increased to thirty-eight. Informant #1 exhibited 24 structures, Informant #2, 22 structures, and Informant #3 exhibited 31 structures. The number shared by all three informants is fifteen.

One of the striking differences between the structures at 4.0 and those at level 4.6 is the greater variability found in patterns utilizing ser and estar. At the 4.6 level, there were twice as many patterns that utilized ser, increasing from three to six. Syntactic patterns incorporating estar increased in number by one, from six to seven. The use of a temporal adverb as a complement of ser made its initial appearance here; only one occurrence was noted. The use of locative adverb as a complement of ser was observed once at 4.0; it did not occur at all at the present 4.6 level.

Throughout the investigation, it has been observed that locative adverbs appear and develop before temporal adverbs. There is a slight suggestion this is happening once again in the ser complement position. Although this type of development would be expected, the data are too scanty to allow the writer to formulate any definite conclusions. The absence of the locative adverb ser complement from the 4.6 group after its debut at 4.0 raises the possibility of sampling error.

One new tense emerged at this level, and it was noted only once in the speech of one informant. The tense in question is the past perfect subjunctive. The same informant was the only one in this age group to use the conditional tense. The tense is not altogether new to the inventory. It was noted with informants at age 3.0. The limited data do not allow the writer to make any kind of statement, however, as to whether it has been internalized or not.

Two other tenses had one occurrence apiece, the inflected form of the future and the past perfect. Both occurred in the speech of the same child. As before, the periphrastic future construction was otherwise the exclusive form for expressing futurity.

Seven tense forms were found in the speech of all informants: imperfect indicative, present progressive, present andar progressive, ir + -ndo , periphrastic future, present perfect indicative, present subjunctive, and past subjunctive. At previous age levels, the present perfect indicative and the past subjunctive had been limited to the speech of one child; at 4.6 all three children appear able to use them.

Verb tenses shared by only two informants include the past(estar) progressive

and the past andar progressive, both common to the same two informants. The tally for the past (estar) progressive is almost identical. Variations of the ir + -ndo pattern appeared in which another verb was used in place of ir (se baja corriendo). This type of analogical expansion is just beginning and not fully developed yet.

All informants used a variety of negatives; full-sentence negation was the most common of these. All three children used ni, nada, and nunca. One informant used tampoco twice in addition to the above. Use of the negative concord transformation was again evident in the speech of all subjects.

Yes-no questions, full-sentence information questions, and questions consisting only of a question word were common to all three informants. The latter type was the least numerous of the three types; the most numerous was the full-sentence information question. Interrogative words used in the yes-no questions were: qué, por qué, para qué, de qué, cómo, cuándo, dónde, cuántos, cuál, quién, and de quién. Qué and cómo are the only two that appear in the speech of each of the three informants. Tag questions, noted in two subject's speech at 4.0, had a single occurrence in the present level speech of one informant. Whether this is indicative of a decline in its use as the children become more mature is not clear. The data are inconclusive on this point.

The use of pre-noun possessives was frequent in the three informants' speech. Only one informant, however, produced the post-nominal forms in the role of possessives. Post-nominal possessive forms were most often used as substantivized forms, duplicating the situation encountered in 4.0. De + noun phrase was a structure shared by all three subjects.

As for imperatives, this type of construction was relatively infrequent, both in number of occurrences and in different types of imperatives, even though conditions for eliciting the forms were approximately those that existed for the previous age groups. None of the command patterns were shared by the three informants. Of the total of five different imperative types, two (verb + indirect object pronoun and verb + direct object pronoun) were encountered in the speech of the same two informants. The other three were limited in occurrence to the speech of one informant, and included one example of verb-only command, and two each of verb + reflexive pronoun and indirect command.

Only one informant used the usted form. Her use of it, however, alternated with the use of the tú form, even when addressing the same person. A similar situation was reported in the speech of one informant at 4.0. It is possible that the informants have learned to use only the tú form with peers but are still attempting to formulate the rules which govern the use of tú and usted with adults. The issue must remain unresolved until further investigation is carried out on this point.

Locative and temporal adverbs continue to occur in significant numbers. Locative adverb clauses were common to all three subjects, as were temporal adverb clauses. Two children used the subjunctive forms in temporal adverb clauses; the other child did not have the occasion to do so. Up to this point, no examples have been noted of locative adverb clauses in which the subjunctive tense is utilized. All examples of locative adverb clauses incorporated donde as the introductory locative adverb. The variety was slightly greater with temporal adverb clauses: two adverbs, cuando and antes que, were the only ones used, the occurrence of the former being much greater than that of the latter.

Compound sentences were observed in the speech samples of each of the three informants. Compound-complex sentences were also produced, but not as often.

All three children in the group used the es que + sentence pattern. The advanced informant also had the greatest number of uses of the conditional si clause. Use by the other two informants was relatively light. Present indicative was again the only tense used in the si clauses. No si clauses utilizing the past subjunctive have been encountered up to now. Questions incorporating this tense in the si clause and the conditional tense in the main clause yielded responses in the imperfect indicative tense. Informal observation of this dialect of Spanish has led the writer to believe that the conditional/imperfect indicative verb form substitution is dialectal and not developmental in nature.

Noun clauses used as direct objects were plentiful, with both indicative and subjunctive forms, in the repertoire of all children at this level. The use of noun clauses with ser was limited to two informants; one occurrence apiece was noted. Relative clauses were also common to the three subjects; incidence of occurrence was high.

Structures involving infinitives that contributed to sentence complexity included verb + infinitive, verb + de + infinitive, and verb + que + infinitive. Deber and acabar were the only verbs that were used in the verb + de + infinitive constructions. Reflexive for reporting unplanned occurrences was shared by all informants.

No decline in the production of substantivized forms was noted from 4.0 to 4.6. The special verb category did not increase in number of different

verbs. Only haber was shared by the three subjects. Repetition of the direct object through a pronoun was observed in the speech sample of all three informants as in the preceding level, instances in which the direct object noun preceded the direct object pronoun were more numerous than those in which the pronoun preceded the direct object noun. A similar structure, involving repetition of the direct object pronoun itself, was noted only once.

The se form of the indirect object pronoun was in evidence in the speech sample of all three children. The con pronouns, -migo and -tigo were limited in occurrence. -Migo was produced by all three subjects, but its occurrence in two of the samples was limited to one. The second form, -tigo was used only once.

Only two informants used the impersonal reflexive form at this level. The personal a was observed in the speech of one informant twice and in another informant three times. It was completely absent from the other informant's speech. The purposive a construction was shared by the three informants; it seemed to occur more frequently than previously. Comparison through use of más and como were encountered, the latter in the speech of only two informants. Comparisons with más were the more common of the two. Even at this advanced stage, comparison through use of menos continues to be absent from the child's inventory.

CHAPTER IX

CHILDREN - AGE 5.0

The final and most advanced level included the following syntactic structures:

(1) (SUBJECT) - SER - NOUN PHRASE

"Este es un monito que está cantando."

(This is a "character" (drawing in a book) who is singing.)

(2) SER - NOUN PHRASE - (SUBJECT)

"...es kindergarten también la escuela."

(The school is also kindergarten.)

(3) (SUBJECT) - SER - ADJECTIVE

"Las brujas son malas."

(The witches are evil.)

(4) ADVERB - SER - (SUBJECT)

"Asina eran los numbers."

(The numbers were like that.)

(5) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - ADJECTIVE

"Es que estoy flaquito."

(It's that I'm thin.)

(6) ESTAR - ADJECTIVE - (SUBJECT)

"Ta muy gandote (grandote) un muchacho..."

(One boy is very big...)

(7) (SUBJECT) - ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB

"...mi casa sta (está) acá enfrente."

(My house is over here in front.)

(8) LOCATIVE ADVERB - ESTAR - (SUBJECT)

"Y acá está la iglesia mía."

(And over here is my church.)

(9) ESTAR - LOCATIVE ADVERB - (SUBJECT)

"Ta pa acá ése."

(That one is over here.)

(10) ESTAR - (SUBJECT) - (ADVERB)

"...está un hilo aquí..."

(There's a thread here.)

(11) (SUBJECT) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"No vive en la casa."

(He doesn't live at home.)

(12) (ADVERB) - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Aquí vive el padle (padre)."

(The priest lives here.)

(13) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"Se va pa su casa."

(He is going to his house.)

(14) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - INTRANSITIVE VERB - (SUBJECT)

"Se cayó la doll."

(The doll fell down.)

(15) (SUBJECT) - TRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"Me subí en una escalera."

(I got on a ladder.)

(16) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - TRANSITIVE VERB - (ADVERB)

"Yo me pasié en la montaña..."

(I took a ride on the ferris wheel.)

(17) (SUBJECT) - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"Ta llevando el snowman pa allá."

(He's taking the snowman over there.)

(18) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT - VERB

"Esta cosa quiero colorear."

(I want to color this thing.)

(19) VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Voy a pintar éste yo."

(I'm going to color this.)

(20) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"Porque me lavo los dientes todos los días."

(Because I brush my teeth every day.)

(21) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"Se quebó (quebró) la mano...la muñeca."

(The doll broke its hand.)

(22) REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT

"¿...se va a comer el gatito el caramelo?"

(Is the kitty going to eat the candy?)

(23) (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (ADVERB)

"Lo aviento pa allá pa arriba."

(I throw it over there - to the top.)

(24) DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT)

"La cierra la mamá."

(The mother closes it.)

(25) (SUBJECT) - REFLEXIVE PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"Se lo va a comer."

(He's going to eat it.)

(26) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (ADVERB)

"Un amiguito mío me aventó un terrón aquí."

(A friend of mine threw a "rock" at me right here.)

(27) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (SUBJECT) - DIRECT OBJECT

"Me dijo mi mamá que no había nada de charro."

(My mother told that there was no "charro" at all.)

(28) INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - (SUBJECT)

"...para que no me haga ruido mi mamá..."

(...so that my mother won't make me any noise.)

(29) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - (ADVERB)

"No, me lo dió en México."

(No, he gave it to me in Mexico.)

(30) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - INDIRECT OBJECT

"A mí me lo pican."

(They cut it up for me.)

(31) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT

"...a mí me trajo este coloring book y la vejiga."

(He brought me this coloring book and the balloon.)

(32) (SUBJECT) - VERB - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - INDIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT

"...ta checándoles al pero (perro) las manos."

(He's checking the dog's hands (paws).)

(33) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - INDIRECT OBJECT - DIRECT OBJECT

"...le voy a dijir (decir) a mi amá que tú eres González."

(I am going to tell my mother that you are González.)

(34) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - DIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT

"Y él también le lleva un present a una muchachita."

(And he is also taking a present to a little girl.)

(35) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB

"...el boy le ta ayudando a su papá."

(The boy is helping his father.)

(36) (SUBJECT) - INDIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUN - VERB - INDIRECT OBJECT

"Se los [illegible] a mi hermanita."

(I gave them to my little sister.)

The total number of distinct structures manifested by the final group is thirty-six; of these eighteen were shared by all informants. Informant #1 exhibited 25 structures, Informant #2 had 25 and Informant #3 exhibited 28 structures.

The patterns encountered at level 5.0 were not significantly different from those of the previous level. Modification of ser by an adverb was noted only once in the three informant samples. A + noun phrase expansion was evident in seven different patterns; this represents an increase of two over the 4.6 level total of five. Curiously enough, all a + noun phrase constructions related to the indirect object pronoun. Absence of a + noun phrase expansion of the direct object can be attributed to sampling error, since it is unlikely that the children would intentionally supress the redundant structure. The four and a half-year old children had not shared any of the a + noun phrase patterns; three had belonged to a single informant. This was undoubtedly due to sampling problems, since at 4.0, one pattern was shared by three and another

by two informants. The 5.0 informants, however, shared two structures containing a + noun phrase, and each informant had one structure that was unique to his speech. The variety of structures was, thus, not dominated by one informant as was the case at level 4.6.

No new tense forms made their debut at this level. In addition to the present indicative and the preterit indicative, the following tense forms were shared by all three subjects at this level: imperfect indicative, present progressive, past progressive, andar progressive, present subjunctive, and periphrastic future. The past subjunctive was produced by two informants. The present perfect and the ir + -ndo constructions were less frequent; only one informant produced each one.

The negatives were much in evidence at this stage in the speech of all three informants. Full-sentence negation with no continued to be the most popular negative in terms of frequency. Negative forms other than no making their appearance included nada, ni, nunca, nadie and tampoco. Two informants exhibited use of the negative concord transformation.

As mentioned earlier, the questions that were produced by the children were completely spontaneous; no attempt was made to elicit any questions. The interviewers were not as fortunate with questions at this level as they had been previously. Only two question types, the single-word question consisting of a question word and the full-sentence information question were shared by all three informants. Among the interrogative words utilized at this level were qué, por qué, dónde, quién, pa (para) qué, and cómo. Yes-no questions were noted in the speech of two subjects, while tag-questions were

limited to one child's speech. In terms of frequency of occurrence, information questions were again the most common of the three.

Pre-noun, post-noun, and de + noun phrase possessives were common to the three five-year-olds. The last type had the greatest number of occurrences. The only post-noun possessive forms encountered were those corresponding to the first person singular (mío, mía). Substantivization of post-noun possessives yielded the same forms. The consistent use of these forms may reflect the child's awareness that the de + noun phrase construction (the most frequent pattern) would yield an ungrammatical *de mí (used earlier by some children).

As with interrogatives, there was a general decline in imperative types. Only one patterntype was common to the three children: verb + indirect object pronoun. Two other constructions, the verb-only imperative and the verb + indirect object pronoun form, were shared by two subjects. Completely absent at this level were the following imperative types: verb + indirect object pronoun + direct object pronoun, verb + reflexive pronoun, and negative commands.

Locative and temporal adverbs continuedin strong fashion. Both locative clauses and temporal adverb clauses were used regularly by all three. Temporal adverb clauses utilized both indicative and subjunctive tenses, as in the previous level. Introductory words included cuando (the most common), antes que, and hasta que. Locative adverb clauses continued to be introduced by donde exclusively; only the indicative mood was noted in locative clauses found in the three-informant sample.

Compound and compound-complex sentences were evident; the former were more

numerous than the latter. Only two informants constructed compound-complex sentences, although all three possessed the elements that make up a compound-complex sentence. The two independent clauses of the compound sentence were joined by conjunctions such as y and pero. The es que + sentence construction occurred in the speech of two informants; the introductory phrase (es que) remained invariant.

The conditional si clause was limited to the speech of one informant. All informants at the previous level had used it at least once. The present indicative tense was used in all occurrences. None of the subjects used the si clause with the past subjunctive tense and the conditional tense in the independent clause. Informants at previous age levels had responded with the imperfect indicative to questions involving si clauses and the past subjunctive. At this level, however, this was not observed.

Relative clauses were abundant in the speech of all 5.0 children, as was the use of the noun clause as a direct object. Use of the noun clause as a sentential subject was not observed at all at this level. It will be recalled that two informants used it only once apiece at level 4.6.

The verb + infinitive construction, one of the first complex syntactic structure, continues to occur in considerable numbers. Querer, saber, poder, and gustar were among the more common fillers for the verb slot. The reflexive for unplanned occurrences construction, though not as numerous as the verb + infinitive pattern, nevertheless was produced frequently by all 5.0 level subjects.

Substantivization, a process that was firmly established very early in

this investigation, was widespread in the speech of the three subjects. No new trends or developments were apparent in going from 4.6 to 5.0. Special verbs gained no new members at this level. Haber and gustarle appear to be favorite forms. Repetition of the direct object through use of a direct object pronoun was present in the speech of all three children. There were also cases of repetition of the direct and indirect object pronouns themselves (one instance of each), both limited to the speech of one informant. The same informant introduced a new variety of redudancy, namely, the repetition of the subject in pronoun form ("the Pleonastic subject"). Total occurrence of this was three.

The se form of the indirect object pronoun seemed to be well-established in the children's linguistic system. Only one informant used the special con pronouns in one instance. Impersonal reflexives were also limited in occurrence to the same informant's speech; three instances were noted. Two informants had used it at the previous level. The personal a construction was present in the speech of two of the children. All three used the purposive a pattern, with varying degrees of frequency. Comparison through the use of más was observed in only one informant while two used the comparative construction with como. The pattern tan ... como was not noted; neither was the use of menos for comparisons.

CONCLUSION

Exploratory investigations by their very nature often pose more questions than they answer. This study is no exception. The investigator has presented some general developmental tendencies; he has also pinpointed areas that require further scientific study. Among the most important of these for any interpretation of results, such as these obtained by the investigator, is an adequate study of regional and social dialects in the area, since without this it is impossible to know whether a structure used by the child is developmental in nature or represents a regional or social dialectal characteristic.

The present information should serve as a helpful guide for teachers, especially those at the kindergarten and primary grade level. It should indicate what type of structures the child is capable of producing at a given level; comparison with the children in her classroom could indicate to her whether her pupils are developing normally for their age. It would enable her to group them according to their language ability in Spanish. It might also suggest which tenses and structures perhaps should be avoided for a given age level.

Curriculum writers could use the findings as a guide in determining the structures to be used at a given age level, from the language and conceptual point of view. The findings will enable them to construct materials for a specific age level and not for an adult population. It would also enable curriculum writers to avoid spending valuable time on structures that the child already knows. The Mexican-American child in this investigation is not retarded in language development, as has been often assumed. It is important

this be realized so that curriculum materials that "talk down" to him (through use of overly simple language structures) can be avoided.

The results of this research should provide some guidelines in the area of test development. Knowing what structures the child can manipulate should enable evaluators to determine which tenses and how complex a sentence to use when testing a child at a given level. Above all, the information collected in this study is of crucial importance for anyone concerned with the design, conduct, or evaluation of bilingual programs for Mexican-Americans and Spanish-speaking students generally. If such programs are to be effective, they must be based on a realistic understanding of the child's language, and of his linguistic capabilities and limitations. This information should serve to dispel effectively the educationally dangerous myth that Mexican-American children have no grammar, and speak a supposedly corrupt mixture of Spanish and English called "Tex-Mex." Thus, this study provides emphatic proof that the Mexican-American child follows a quite consistent upward growth in his acquisition of Spanish grammar, and that the grammar he acquires, far from being corrupt, is probably as Spanish as that found anywhere in the Spanish-speaking world. This knowledge should inspire the teacher to a greater respect for the speech of the child, and for the truly impressive nature of his linguistic achievement.

It is the author's hope that this study will be followed by many others. There is, for example, an immediate need for a comparative study among economically deprived groups to test for the effect, if any, of economic deprivation on language development.

Real-time case studies are needed to supplement the present apparent-time

study, and the time limits need to be extended in both directions. Carefully-controlled competence tests are needed, and more detailed studies of particular grammatical features need to be carried out, using a variety of theoretical models. The present study can contribute to our understanding of universals in child language acquisition, but it is only a beginning. The field is relatively new, and much remains to be done.